

Message Text

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ACTION SIL-01

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00
EB-08 INR-07 LAB-04 NSAE-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02
SS-15 EA-07 /087 W
-----191052Z 115188 /13

R 181607Z MAR 77
FM USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3298
INFO ALL EC CAPITALS 3294
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
AMCONSUL CAPETOWN
AMCONSUL DURBAN
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG
USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L EC BRUSSELS 2655

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: ELAB, SF, ICFTU
SUBJECT: ICFTU: SOUTH AFRICA DEVELOPMENTS

REF: EC BRUSSELS 754 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY. THE INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE
UNIONS (ICFTU) IS KEEPING UP A LIVELY INTEREST IN SOUTH AFRICA.
ONE REASON IS THAT ITS COMMUNIST RIVAL, THE WORLD FEDERATION OF
FREE TRADE UNIONS (WFTU), IS BUSY SEEKING TO EXPAND ITS OWN
INFLUENCE AMONG SOUTH AFRICAN WORKERS. END SUMMARY.

2. DESPITE DISAPPOINTING RESULTS FROM A "WEEK OF SOLID-
ARITY" WITH SOUTH AFRICAN WORKERS, THE ICFTU IS IN THE
EARLY STAGES OF PLANNING FOR ANOTHER WEEK OF ANTI-APARTHEID PROTEST
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LATER THIS YEAR. A RECOMMENDATION FOR RENEWED ACTIVITY WILL
BE ON THE AGENDA OF THE MAY MEETING OF THE ICFTU EXECUTIVE
BOARD IN ROME.

3. IN PREPARATION FOR THAT MEETING, THE NORDIC COUNCIL OF
TRADE UNIONS, WHICH GROUPS THE SCANDINAVIAN AFFILIATES OF
THE ICFTU, HAS DRAWN UP PLANS FOR "REAL INDUSTRIAL ACTION"

AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA IN THE TRANSPORT FIELD, ACCORDING TO ICFTU SECRETARIAT SOURCES.

4. THE RECOMMENDATION FOR ANOTHER "SOLIDARITY WEEK" WAS ADOPTED AT THE MARCH 14 MEETING OF THE ICFTU COORDINATING COMMITTEE ON SOUTH AFRICA.

CONFERENCES INVOLVING SOUTH AFRICA:

A. THE LABOR CONFERENCE AGAINST APARTHEID, WHICH WILL BE HELD IN GENEVA JUNE 10 TO 11 UNDER THE SPONSORSHIP OF THE WORKERS' GROUP OF THE ILO GOVERNING BODY.

B. THE PAN-AFRICAN TRADE UNION CONFERENCE OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE WORKERS AND PEOPLES OF SOUTHERN AFRICA, WHICH WAS HELD IN LUANDA, ANGOLA, JANUARY 31 TO FEBRUARY 2.

5. THE DAY PRIOR TO THE GENEVA APARTHEID CONFERENCE, ACCORDING TO ICFTU GENERAL SECRETARY OTTO KERSTEN, THE ICFTU WILL HOLD A CAUCUS OF ITS PARTICIPANTS IN THE MEETING. KERSTEN SAYS THAT THE CONFERENCE POSES A "DANGER OF MIXING UP THE THREE LABOR INTERNATIONALS" -- THE ICFTU, THE WORLD FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS (WFTU), AND THE WORLD CONFEDERATION OF LABOR (WCL), ALL OF WHOM WILL BE WELL REPRESENTED.

6. AS IT DID AT THE 1973 ILO CONFERENCE AGAINST APARTHEID, THE WFTU WILL PRESS FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PERMANENT INTERNATIONAL LABOR COORDINATING COMMITTEE ON SOUTH AFRICA. KERSTEN CALLS SUCH A COMMITTEE A "NON-STARTER," BUT THE RECENT PAN-AFRICAN CONFERENCE AT LUANDA DID BUILD UP SUPPORT FOR IT.
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7. THE LUANDA MEETING WAS BILLED IN ADVANCE AS BEING SPONSORED BY THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN TRADE UNION UNITY (OATUU), WITH THE NATIONAL UNION OF ANGOLAN WORKERS (UNTA) AS HOSTS. BUT, AS SOON DISCOVERED BY ANDREW KAILEMBO, THE ICFTU STAFFER WHO ATTENDED, THE WFTU AND ITS SUPPORTERS HAD THE MEETING WELL IN HAND. IN ADDITION TO 22 AFRICAN COUNTRIES, THE USSR, ROMANIA, EAST GERMANY, POLAND, BULGARIA, FRANCE (CGT), ITALY (CGIL), PORTUGAL (INTERSINDICAL), NORTH KOREA, AND VIET NAM WERE ALL REPRESENTED, AS WERE THE PLO AND TRADE UNION WINGS OF AFRICAN LIBERATION MOVEMENTS -- ZACU, NUNW, AND SACTU.

8. THE MAIN ACTION OF THE LUANDA CONFERENCE WAS TO ADOPT A RESOLUTION URGING "THE SETTING UP OF A PERMANENT INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE WITH THE WORKERS AND PEOPLES OF SOUTHERN AFRICA COMPRISING REPRESENTATIVES OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION ORGANIZATIONS (WFTU, ICFTU, WCL), REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS (OATUU, ICATU), PERMANENT SECRETARIAT OF THE ANTI-APARTHEID COMMITTEE TOGETHER WITH TRADE UNIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE LIBERATION

MOVEMENT, NAMELY, THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS (SACTU), THE NATIONAL UNION OF NAMIBIAN WORKERS (NUNW), AND THE ZIMBABWE AFRICAN CONGRESS OF UNIONS (ZACU)."

9. THE COMMITTEE WOULD SERVE AS THE CHANNEL OF ALL INTERNATIONAL LABOR FUNDS, AND THESE WOULD IN TURN BE CHanneLED ONLY TO SACTU, NUNW, AND ZACU, A PLOY TO DIVERT ICFTU AND OTHER RESOURCES TO WFTU PURPOSES.

10. NOT SURPRISINGLY, KAILEMBO OPPOSED THE COMMITTEE IDEA, BUT THE WCL REPRESENTATIVE AT THE MEETING, ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY DOMINIQUE AGUESSY, SUPPORTED IT. THIS WCL ENDORSEMENT HAS BEEN THE SUBJECT OF PHONE CALLS AND A MEETING THIS WEEK BETWEEN KERSTEN AND WCL GENERAL SECRETARY JAN KULAKOWSKI, WITH THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE WCL MIGHT CHANGE ITS POSITION. ONE ARGUMENT KERSTEN USED, AS KAILEMBO DID AT LUANDA, WAS THAT RECOGNIZING SACTU AS THE SOLE REP

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RESENTATIVE OF AFRICAN WORKERS INSIDE SOUTH AFRICA WOULD MEAN SHUTTING OFF HELP TO THE GROUPS NOW DOING MOST FOR ORGANIZING AND REPRESENTING AFRICAN WORKERS.

11. ONE REASON FOR KAILEMBO'S TRIP WAS TO SEE WHETHER THERE WERE ANY OPPORTUNITIES FOR ICFTU WORK IN ANGOLA AND MOZAMBIQUE. HE CONCLUDED THAT MOZAMBIQUE'S LABOR PEOPLE WERE FIRMLY IN THE WFTU CAMP, BUT THAT POSSIBILITIES EXISTED IN ANGOLA BECAUSE THE UNTA SHOWED A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF OPENNESS. KERSTEN IN A MEETING WITH BRUSSELS LABOR ATTACHES RULED OUT WORKING IN EITHER COUNTRY.

12. COPIES OF KAILEMBO'S REPORT ON THE LUANDA CONFERENCE, WHICH WE HAVE OBTAINED ON A CONFIDENTIAL BASIS, WILL BE AIRPOUCHED TO S/IL (GOOD) AND AF/I (SLEZAK). HINTON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS, APARTHEID, BOYCOTTS, LABOR UNIONS, FREE TRADE AREAS, COMMUNIST LABOR ORGANIZATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
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Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977ECBRU02655
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770094-1007
Format: TEL
From: EC BRUSSELS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770347/aaaaboci.tel
Line Count: 153
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
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Office: ACTION SIL
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 EC BRUSSELS 754
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3069763
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ICFTU: SOUTH AFRICA DEVELOPMENTS
TAGS: ELAB, SF, ICFTU, WFTU
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/860feeb5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009